

Sister, Sister by Thegracefulnerd

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Summary:

"This is all you have?" Nancy asked the girl, her eyes looking over the few hand me down dresses and shirts.

Eleven nodded somewhat sheepishly. Nancy instantly felt bad for implying that there was something wrong with only having hand me downs. Most of the dresses were hers anyway. It was just that she wanted Eleven to feel some sense of normalcy.

"Come on, we're going shopping." Nancy instructed.

Sister, Sister

Author's Note:

This has been bouncing around in my head for a while and I was dying to get it out in writing finally. It's a slight AU because Eleven doesn't disappear into the Upside Down, she stays happy and healthy and Will is back. Basically, Nancy realizes Eleven has never even had the simple pleasure of buying herself something nice, something all her own, and she takes her shopping for a few new outfits. Somehow whilst shopping the two end up becoming very close.

Also, PSA: I personally love Steve I'm just not the biggest Stancy fan. He's a cinnamon roll though and is very sweet to Nancy.

Nancy was over at the Byers. This wasn't much of a shock as she was over at the Byers a lot these days. It had started when her relationship with Steve started deteriorating back in January. After the disaster with the Upside Down, Nancy had grown distant and anxious. She slept with the pistol Jonathan gave her under her pillow, just in case. Sometimes she'd wake up in a cold sweat, reaching for the phone to call Barb and tell her about this crazy dream she had where her brother met a girl with super powers named Eleven and she'd started hanging out with *Jonathan Byers of all people! Then she'd realize it wasn't a dream. She'd realize that it had all happened in a horrific nightmarish way, and that the one person she wanted to talk to about it was gone.*

After that the distance between her and Steve became too much. He needed someone who was present in the relationship, he needed someone to talk to. Nancy needed something real, something that made her feel safe, grounded. She and Steve parted on good terms though and still spoke every now and then. It was more than she could've hoped for after the way she retreated from him and everyone else for months. Except for Jonathan. He was the one person besides the boys and Eleven that really seemed to understand the gravity of what happened. The time they spent together

developed quickly from friendship into something way more complicated, and way better.

So Nancy was over, waiting for Jonathan to get off work and watching Mike and the boys play atari. He had insisted he come over with Nancy to see Will and meet up with Dustin and Lucas, but Nancy knew it was because of his crush on Eleven. She had to admit it was cute. It reminded her of her first crush when she was in middle school. All awkward blushing and sweaty palms and nervous laughter. It was sweet in a childish way. Eleven had grown her hair out a little and it curled into a stylish pixie cut rather than the boyish buzz cut she had had previously. She was sitting on the couch beside Nancy watching Will and Mike yell at each other over the game they were playing. Eleven seemed to fit in well with the Byers, and she seemed happy. After Will came back, Joyce had decided that Eleven couldn't live in Mike and Nancy's basement anymore, so she'd happily taken the 12 year old girl in. It was hard at first, having to adjust to having an extra mouth to feed and a whole new wardrobe to buy for a girl rather than a boy. Typically Will got most of Jonathan's hand me downs, so having to buy a whole new set of girls clothes for Eleven was stressful enough in itself. And then there were the superpowers. It was kind of cool sometimes, and then sometimes it made everyone but Mike and the boys uneasy. Nancy wasn't scared of Eleven though, she felt almost sisterly to her in a way.

"Hey El, how's it going with finding clothes?" Nancy asked suddenly.

Eleven looked up, startled at being asked such a blunt question. A blush crept up Eleven's neck and she smiled a little. "Good...Do you want to see?"

Nancy nodded and stood to follow Eleven who was already gliding down the hallway. She had been staying in Joyce's room with her until they could find suitable sleeping arrangement. The girl marched in as if she were on a mission and pulled out the bottom drawer of the dresser. She picked out the outfits and laid them out neatly to show them off for Nancy. There were three dresses, two nice blouses a pair of jeans and a sweatshirt.

"This is all you have?" Nancy asked the girl, her eyes looking over the few hand me down dresses and shirts.

Eleven nodded somewhat sheepishly. Nancy instantly felt bad for implying that there was something wrong with only having hand me downs. Most of the dresses had been hers at one point anyway. It was just that she wanted Eleven to feel some sense of normalcy.

"Come on, we're going shopping." Nancy instructed.

Eleven looked up with her wide eyes and unwavering gaze. "Shopping?"

Nancy nodded. "Yeah, like buying new clothes, getting a new outfit, it'll be fun."

Eleven nodded and smiled. "Fun."

"Come on, go get your shoes and meet me at the car." Nancy told her. She walked back out of the room and then thought to scrawl a note for Jonathan, knowing that the boys wouldn't remember to tell him where she'd gone. She grabbed a notepad from the kitchen and tore a sheet off, scrawling a quick explanation as to where she'd gone.

Out shopping with El, will be back later.

-XO Nancy

She placed to note in his room and then walked back out to the living room.

"Guys, El and I are going shopping so be cool. Don't do anything stupid." Nancy commanded, grabbing her purse and jacket from the couch.

"Shopping?" Lucas questioned.

"Aw shit Nancy's gonna turn El over to the girly side." Dustin exclaimed dramatically.

"Shut up Dustin! It'll be fine, El needs some new clothes anyway." Nancy protested.

The four boys looked skeptically at Nancy and now El who'd come up behind Nancy at some point in the conversation. Mike shrugged, "Ok fine.

Later El, later Nance."

Nancy walked out the door and El followed. The two girls piled into Karen's car and Nancy grinned. "Ready for your first time shopping?"

El smiled, "Ready."

They drove to the small outlet mall that was about fifteen minutes outside of Hawkins over in the neighboring county. The department stores weren't crowded on Wednesday afternoon which Nancy was grateful for. The less people to see Eleven being well, Eleven, the better. There was a food court in the center of the mall as well as a movie store and a comic book shop. Nancy made a mental note to grab the comic book that Mike had wanting, The Adventures of Lando Calrissian. He'd been bugging their mom about it for weeks and it was driving everyone crazy. Once they pulled in and got a parking place Nancy explained to Eleven about the stores and which ones they'd most likely be going to. They got out and meandered around for a few minutes, trying to decide where to go.

"Pretty." El whispered. The girl's soft voice was almost too quite for Nancy to hear, but she soon saw what El was looking at. A baby blue dress on a mannequin with a lace collar and long sleeves. Not unlike the pink one Eleven had worn weeks ago. Eleven's eyes were shining at the prospect of buying something pretty, and something all her own. It made Nancy's heart swell with empathy for the girl, and then anger at the lab that had held her hostage for so long. Eleven hadn't known a life outside a number for a name and cruel people in dark suits.

"It is pretty nice, huh? Come on we'll go check it out."

Eleven's smile was the brightest one Nancy thought she'd ever seen.

An hour later they were walking out of the department store feeling rather accomplished. Eleven had gotten the blue dress after all, along with a new jean jacket, two blouses, another pair of pants and a pair of sneakers. Nancy had bought herself a new pair of sunglasses that she'd been needing for a while and a new dress. She didn't see why she couldn't treat herself too.

Nancy had been a little surprised to realize how much she enjoyed Eleven's company. Although she wasn't as talkative as others were, she could still

laugh and make jokes, she even made a joke with the hideous bright orange frilly blouse they'd seen in the store. She could see now why the boys had such an attachment to her.

"God Elizabeth, I don't want Brian to see that much of me!" A girl giggled, passing Nancy and Eleven.

"Don't be such a prude Lisa. Brian wants to see as much as he can get his hands on!" The other girl exclaimed back.

Nancy fought the urge to roll her eyes, but Eleven beat her to it.

"Mouth breather." The girl said in an annoyed tone. Nancy burst out laughing and nearly doubled over at the seriousness of Eleven's voice. She looked to see where the girls were going and realized they were headed to the store that specialized in undergarments. Then reality smacked Nancy square in the face and she stopped laughing. It hit her that Eleven didn't realize what bras were... or all the other fun stuff that came with being a girl. Shit, I'm gonna have to do this now because Joyce has only ever raised boys, she thought.

She looked at Eleven and smiled, "Yeah but sadly the mouth breathers have a point... Come on El, you're gonna learn about the joys of being female."

Thirty minutes and two awkward conversations later, they walked out of the store feeling even more accomplished. Eleven had learned what she needed and Nancy managed not to have a nervous breakdown while explaining it. She was going to count it as an unqualified victory. Eleven looked just a little bit uncomfortable and so Nancy thought this would be a good time to visit the comic book store.

"Hey El, I saw a comic book store while were parking. Could you help me find a comic book for Mike? I know he's been dying for the next issue of Lando but I'm not sure which one that is." Nancy asked. She was wondering if Mike's feelings for El were reciprocated, or if she was still clueless as to the fact that Mike was head over heels for her.

She found her answer when Eleven's face lit up like a Christmas tree. "Yes, I can help,". Nancy just smirked and motioned for Eleven to follow her.

Nancy was not used to comic book stores. She didn't understand the difference between an issue and a collection and the endless aisles of Dungeons and Dragons merchandising made her head spin. But somehow Eleven managed to navigate the dark comic shop with ease. In fact she looked more comfortable here than she had all day. They would come across Star Wars action figures and Dungeons and Dragons characters and she would point out all of them.

"This is Dustin's favorite comic."

"Will loves Han Solo. Jonathan bought him an action figure when he was eight."

"Lucas says that this is total crap." She pointed to a Dungeons and Dragons variation that looked particularly flashy.

"This is what Mike wants." Eleven said, handing the comic to Nancy. She'd picked it out almost instantly among the hundreds of comics with Lando's face on them. Nancy was equally impressed as she was thrilled that Eleven loved the boys so much. Although she didn't talk a lot and could be considered socially awkward, she obviously paid close attention to everything those boys did. She even pointed out an album of one of Jonathan's favorite bands. It made Nancy feel special that Eleven had made a family for herself amongst all of them. They got the comic, and the album for Jonathan because why not? And left the shop, feeling pretty pleased with what they bought.

"You ready to head home El? I think Joyce said Hopper was coming over to help her cook tonight." Nancy asked El. El looked up at Nancy with excitement, and nodded.

"I like Hopper. He cooks better than Joyce." The girl stated bluntly, her nose wrinkled to emphasize her distaste for Joyce's cooking.

Nancy laughed so hard she thought she had abs, "Really? Joyce is that bad? Jonathan told me she struggled but I didn't think it was that bad."

"Very bad." Eleven said seriously.

Nancy kept laughing and made her way back to the car with Eleven. She looked over at the twelve year old to see her grinning happily looking

down at all the bags she had collected from their day out. Nancy beamed, thrilled that she was the one to take Eleven on her first shopping spree. "So did you have fun today?" Nancy asked.

"Yes! I had a lot of fun Nancy." Eleven told her, still grinning.

"I'm glad. I really am EL..." she hesitated for half a beat and then continued, "You know, you can come to me any time now right? You're basically family, so I'll be there anytime you need me ok? If you need to rant about boys, or school, or just want to go shopping or see a movie, I'll be here."

Eleven stopped dead and looked Nancy right in the eyes, her big brown eyes shining. "Really?"

"Really."

Eleven didn't say another word the rest of the walk to the car. Nancy was almost afraid she'd overstepped her boundaries, but once they put all the bags into the back seat of the car, Eleven had walked over to Nancy. "Thank you, Nancy." And then she hugged her. Nancy was taken by surprise but hugged the girl back anyway. It was nice to feel like she had a little sister. Not that she didn't love Mike, but she felt beyond thrilled to have another girl to talk to.

"Anytime EL."

The drive back to the Byers' house was almost chatty. El seemed to have finally opened up and talked a little bit about her friendship with the boys and how they got on her nerves sometimes, and sometimes she wanted to kill them. Nancy had laughed and assured her that all guys are that way unfortunately. Once they reached the Byers they unloaded all their bags from the car and walked in. Joyce and Hopper were in the kitchen, the boys were still playing Atari and Jonathan was sprawled out on the couch looking bored.

"Oh God look, it's starting." Dustin wailed once he saw El with all her shopping bags.

"Shut up Dustin." Nancy said, at the same time as El said, "Shut up."

The girls looked at each other and giggled a little at what happened and El

went in the kitchen to show Joyce what she'd bought. Jonathan looked at Nancy and smiled. "Did I miss something?"

Nancy shook her head, "Nope, we just went shopping."